In response to the Examiner's objection to the disclosure, wherein the Examiner objected to the use of the terms electrical component 16 and electrical connector 16, Applicants respectfully traverse the Examiner's objection and draw the Examiner's attention to page 5, lines 18 and 19 of the disclosure. The disclosure, at the aforementioned location, describes an electrical connector as a specific form of electrical component 16. "Electrical component" is the generic term used and "electrical connector" is the specific term for the embodiment shown in the drawings. Accordingly, Applicants submit that the disclosure is in allowable form.

Responsive to the rejection of claim 6 under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph, wherein the Examiner has indicated that a plurality of annular projections is not shown on the drawings, Applicants respectfully traverse the Examiner's rejection and would draw the Examiner's attention to both page 6, line 17 of the disclosure and Fig 4. The disclosure, at the aforementioned location, describes annular projections 42 as a part of plug 18. Fig. 4 illustrates plug 18 as having three annular projections 42. Accordingly, Applicants submit that claim 6 is in allowable form, the allowance of which is respectfully requested.

Responsive to the rejection of claims 1-3 and 5-13 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,283,393 (Guginsky), Applicants respectfully traverse the Examiners rejection of claims 1-3 and 5-13.

Guginsky discloses an armored flexible electrical conduit with fittings (Figs. 1 and 2) including a flexible hermetically tight metal conduit 11, a conduit connector female compression fitting 12 and a male tubular coupling 13. Fitting 12 and coupling 13 are coupled to conduit 11 in a hermetically sealed relationship. Fittings 12 and/or coupling13 are also used to provide a conduit connection to an electrical junction box (column 2, lines 47-59). Female compression fitting 12 is provided with gland nut 27 which compresses a gland or gasket encircling a conduit inserted into

female compression fitting 12 thereby clamping conduit 11 and effecting a hermetically tight coupling (column 3, lines 33-38). An insulation covered multiple conductor cable 29 traverses the length of conduit 11, fittings 12 and couplings 13 (column 3, lines 61-65).

In contrast claim 1, recites in part:

> an electrical component ... hermetically sealing said tubing end.

(Emphasis added) Applicants submit that such an invention is neither taught, disclosed nor suggested by Guginsky or any of the other cited references, alone or in combination, and includes distinct advantages thereover.

Guginsky discloses the use of fittings 12 and couplings 13 to hermetically seal conduit 11 to another conduit 11 or an electrical junction box through which conductor cable 29 traverses. However, Guginsky does not teach or suggest an electrical component hermetically sealing the tubing ends. Specifically, the hermetic sealing of the ends of a tubing assembly, as in the Applicants' invention, is distinct from hermetically sealing a conduit to another conduit or a junction box, such as taught by Guginsky. Guginsky teaches electrical conductors being routed through conduit 11 after the hermetic seal is established. However, Applicants' invention hermetically seals the end of the tubing not allowing the routing of conductors after the seal is in place. Therein lies an advantage of Applicants' invention, that being a hermetic seal to an end of a tubing assembly, which provides environmental protection when unattached to any other assembly. In contrast, the conduit of Guginsky would not be hermetically sealed if left unattached to another conduit or electrical junction box. Accordingly, Applicants submit that claim 1, and claims 2-3 and 5-9 depending therefrom, are now in condition for allowance, which is hereby respectfully requested.

Additionally claim 10, recites in part:

an electrical connector ... hermetically sealing said tubing end.

(Emphasis added) Applicants submit that such an invention is neither taught, disclosed nor suggested by Guginsky or any of the other cited references, alone or in combination, and includes distinct advantages thereover.

Guginsky discloses the use of fittings 12 and couplings 13 to hermetically seal conduit 11 to another conduit 11 or an electrical junction box through which conductor cable 29 traverses. However, Guginsky but does not teach or suggest an electrical connector hermetically sealing the tubing ends. Specifically, the hermetic sealing of the ends of a tubing assembly, as in the Applicants' invention, is distinct from hermetically sealing a conduit to another conduit or a junction box, such as taught by Guginsky. Guginsky teaches electrical conductors being routed through conduit 11 after the hermetic seal is established. However, Applicants' invention hermetically seals the end of the tubing not allowing the routing of conductors after the seal is in place. Therein lies an advantage of Applicants' invention, that being a hermetic seal to an end of a tubing assembly, which provides environmental protection when unattached to any other assembly. The conduit of Guginsky would not be hermetically sealed if left unattached to another conduit or electrical junction box. Accordingly, Applicants submit that claim 10, and claims 11-13 depending therefrom, are now in condition for allowance, which is hereby respectfully requested.

Responsive to the rejection of claims 4 and 14-17 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Guginsky in view of U.S. Patent No. 3,144,545 (Shrimplin et al.), Applicants respectfully traverse the Examiners rejection of claims 4 and 14-17.

Guginsky is described above.

Shrimplin et al. disclose a heating assembly (Figs. 1 and 2) including end portions 16 and

17 of electrical conductors, armor 18 and plug 19. Armor 18 surrounds electrical conductors from a point disposed within the boundaries of a heating grid and extend a significant distance from the grid. Ground wire 20 extends beyond armor 18 to effect a suitable ground (column 2, lines 24-34). Leads 16 and 17 extend far enough to be connected to a source of electrical energy (column 3, lines 42-51).

In contrast claim 14, recites in part:

> a plug hermetically sealing said tubing end, said at least one electrical conductor extending through and sealed with said plug.

(Emphasis added) Applicants submit that such an invention is neither taught, disclosed nor suggested by Guginsky or Shrimplin et al. or any of the other cited references, alone or in combination, and includes distinct advantages thereover.

Guginsky discloses the use of fittings 12 and 13 to hermetically seal conduit 11 to another conduit 11 or an electrical junction box through which conductor cable 29 traverses. Shrimplin et al. disclose the use of a plug 19 to terminate end portions 16 and 17 of electrical conductors, thereby providing an electrical connection to a heating element. However, neither Guginsky nor Shrimplin et al. alone or in combination with any other cited reference disclose, teach or suggest a plug hermetically sealing the tubing end, with at least one electrical conductor extending therethrough and sealed with the plug. The Examiner contends that armor 18 extends to plug 19 providing a hermetic sealing of armor 18. However, Shrimplin et al. does not show in the drawings nor describe in the specification a hermetic seal between armor 18 and plug 19. To the contrary, the drawings and the specification show and infer that armor 18 does not extend to plug 19. Specifically, Shrimplin et al. states, "armor 18 should extend a distance of at least three feet from the edge 24 of the slab. The leads 16 and 17, of course, will extend far enough so that the

plug 19 may be connected to a suitable source of electrical energy." (column 3, lines 47-51). Further, Shrimplin et al. does not describe armor 18 as hermetic itself. As such, the Examiner's contention of the existence of a hermetic seal between armor 18 and plug 19 is not supported by the disclosure.

Accordingly, Applicants submit that claim 4, which depends from claim 1, is in condition for allowance as discussed supra, and claim 10 as well as claims 11-13 which depend therefrom, are now in condition for allowance for the reasons given above, the allowance of which is hereby respectfully requested.

For the foregoing reasons, Applicants submit that the pending claims are definite and do particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which Applicants regard as the invention. Moreover, Applicants submit that no combination of the cited references teaches, discloses or suggests the subject matter of the amended claims. The pending claims are therefore in condition for allowance, and Applicants respectfully request withdrawal of all rejections and allowance of the claims.

In the event Applicants have overlooked the need for an extension of time, an additional extension of time, payment of fee, or additional payment of fee, Applicants hereby conditionally petition therefor and authorizes that any charges be made to Deposit Account No. 20-0095, TAYLOR & AUST, P.C.

Should any question concerning any of the foregoing arise, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned at (219) 897-3400.

Respectfully submitted,

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CERTIFICATE OF MAILING

I hereby certify that this correspondence is being deposited with the United States Postal Service as first class mail in an envelope addressed to: Box Non-Fee Amendment, Commissioner for Patents, Washington, DC 20231, on: November 29, 2001.

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Signature

November 29, 2001
Date